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March 29, 2022

ADM Karl Schultz
Commandant of the Coast Guard
2703 Martin Luther King Jr Ave SE
Washington, DC 20020

Dear Commandant Schultz:

Today H.R. 6865, the *Don Young Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2022*, has passed the House of Representatives. My district contains Coast Guard Sector Buffalo, which has a long history of waterfront stewardship and protecting our Great Lakes. I write to ask that as the Coast Guard works through its deliberate prioritization process for Fiscal Year 2023 funding, that the Phase 4 and Phase 5 improvements at Sector Buffalo be given the strongest possible consideration so as to be expedited to facilitate infrastructure improvements and public access to Buffalo's waterfront and historic lighthouse.

Buffalo's waterfront has undergone a striking transformation over the last twenty years from a polluted, industrial area devoid of public access to a destination for active and passive recreation, including a New York State Park. The Coast Guard has been an important partner in the waterfront's evolution, specifically in the development and execution of a plan to open land controlled by Sector Buffalo to public access and eventual divestiture. Sector Buffalo's current property contains the historic Buffalo Light, one of the oldest lighthouses on the Great Lakes. Originally built in 1833, the Buffalo Light is a destination for tourists and visitors alike, but is currently difficult to access due to the configuration of the Coast Guard station. The next and final phases of this agreement are Phases 4 and 5 of the Coast Guard's plan, which involve work on the Sector Operations Building (Phase 4) and the Sector Engineering and Electronic Support Detachment Building (Phase 5) that will lead to divesting land adjacent to the shoreline and Buffalo Light for public access. According to conversations with the Coast Guard, implementing Phases 4 and 5 concurrently will save the government potentially millions of dollars through contracting and logistical efficiencies. In order for Sector Buffalo to operate at its highest capacity, and allow the Buffalo waterfront to reach its fullest potential, it is imperative to complete this project as quickly as possible.

I appreciate the Coast Guard's willingness to engage throughout the process of securing funding for Sector Buffalo improvements and increasing public access to Buffalo's waterfront and the Buffalo Light. The Coast Guard's invaluable partnership in waterfront restoration and completion of this plan will provide protection to the Great Lakes, improvements to Sector Buffalo's infrastructure, and an enhanced capability for public access to the water. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



BRIAN HIGGINS
Member of Congress